(b) if so, whether the areas identified for the purpose included the new areas proposed to be brought under apple cultivation and if so, the source and the quantum of funds required for the purpose; and

(c) the extent to which apple production is expected to increase, year-wise during the next three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA) : (a) The Government is implementing a Centrally Sponsord Scheme on Technology Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture in the North Eastern States, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttaranchal. Under this Scheme, the covered State Governments can take up programmes for increasing the production of apples.

(b) Under the scheme, new areas could be brought under apple cultivation. An amount of Rs. 385.00 lakh was provided to the State Governments of Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttaranchal and Jammu & Kashmir during 2003-04 and 2004-05.

(c) No estimates have been made on the year wise increase in production of apples in the next three years.

**Investment in Agriculture Sector**

3890. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the provisions made for raising the level of investment in the agriculture sector; and

(b) the details of allocation made for new schemes in rural areas as revenue expenditure and that as durable investment component?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) With a view to raising the level of investment in agriculture sector, including the allied sectors of forestry and logging and fishing, the plan outlay of the Ministry of agriculture has been raised by 43% from Rs. 4,192 crore in 2004-05 (Budget Estimates) to Rs. 5,998 crore in 2005-06 (Budget Estimates).

(b) A number of new schemes aimed at improving productive capacity in agriculture, which largely benefits rural areas by raising employment

and income, have been taken up, The details of schemes and allocations for them during 2005-06 are given below. The plan outlay for the schemes shown below consists of both revenue and capital components. However, the distinction between revenue and capital components given in the Budget Documents is not strictly based on distinction between items of expenditure, which significantly contribute to formation of durable assets and those, which do not significantly contribute to formation of durable assets. Often the contribution in the field of agriculture to formation of capital of assets is indirect. For example, according to the Budget Classification the entire plan outlay for the Department of Agricultural Research & Education is categorized as revenue, whereas it is widely known that a considerable proportion of the outlay on agriculture research and education would contribute to improvement in productive capacity in agriculture, which would in turn contribute to improvement in income and welfare of the people in rural areas. This also holds good in case of plan outlays of many other schemes like horticulture, irrigation, etc.

(i) **National Horticulture Mission:** A sum of Rs.630 crore has been provided for the scheme, aimed at ensuring an end-to-end approach having backward and forward linkages covering research, production, post harvest management, processing and marketing, under one umbrella, in an integrated manner.

(ii) **Development/Strengthening of Agricultural marketing infrastructure, Grading and Standardization:** A sum of Rs.72 crore has been allocated for the scheme, aimed at inducing large investments from private and cooperative sectors for setting up agricultural markets, marketing infrastructure and support services such as grading, standardization, etc.

(iii) **Micro Irrigation**: Micro-irrigation scheme is expected to promote water use efficiency in Indian agriculture. A sum of Rs.400 crore has been allocated for the scheme, aimed at promoting micro-irrigation technology, comprising drip and sprinkler irrigation on a large scale in the year 2005-06. About 1.2 million hectares have been covered under micro-irrigation so far and it is proposed to increase the coverage to 3 million hectares by the end of the 10th plan.

(iv) **Agricultural Research:** In order to promote agricultural research, it is necessary to strengthen and modernize the agricultural universities

and research institutions, which have done good work in the past. A Task Force headed by Dr. M. S. Swaminathan has recommended the creation of a National Fund for Strategic Agricultural Research. The Union Budget for 2005-06 has announced an initial provision of Rs.50 crore for operationalizing this fund.

**Plantation and Horticultural land Damaged in A&N Islands**

3891. SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the area of plantation and horticultural land damaged or affected in Andaman and Nicobar Islands due to earthquake-cum-Tsunami on 26th December, 2004;

(b) the number of coconut trees and arecanut trees damaged there;

(c) whether there is any scheme formulated by Government to compensate the losses of coconut and arecanut trees sustained by the Islanders; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) An area of 10,500 hectares of plantation and horticultural crop was affected due to earthquake-cum-Tsunami in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands on 26th December, 2004.

(b) A total of 13.50 lakh coconut trees and 5.0 lakh arecanut trees were uprooted/damaged due to Tsunami.

(c) and (d) The Government of India has sanctioned Rs.239.54 crore under Short Term Action programme for restoration and rehabilitation of agriculture activities for Tsunami affected areas. This includes assistance for taking up cropping programmes on horticultural crops covering coconut, arecanut and root crops amounting to Rs.93.22 crores. Besides, assistance has been extended for mitigating crops loss, as per Calamity Relief Fund norms, on the following:—

(i) For reclamation of agricultural land @ Rs.5,000 per hectare.